

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An electric power steering apparatus, comprising:

a steering assist motor for assisting operation of a steering mechanism by turning a steering member; and

a supporting mechanism for supporting said motor on a stationary member,

wherein the supporting mechanism has an impact releasing mechanism configured to release ~~for releasing~~ support of the motor on the stationary member ~~by~~when impact energy is applied to the motor.

2. (Original) The electric power steering apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the supporting mechanism comprises a projection provided at one of the motor and the stationary member and a recess provided at the other of the motor and the stationary member, the projection being inserted into the recess, and the releasing mechanism comprises a movement permitting portion for permitting relative movement of the projection in the recess and a slip-off portion from where the projection slips off the movement permitting portion.

3. (Original) The electric power steering apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein the releasing mechanism has an elastic member for pushing the projection provided at one of the motor and the stationary member outward at a position of the slip-off portion.

4.-5. (Canceled).

6. (Original) The electric power steering apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein the motor has a rotor arranged so that a rotational center thereof intersects an axis of a steering shaft joined to the steering member and a cylindrical motor housing for supporting said rotor, and a peripheral face of said motor housing is provided with an impact energy receiver for applying rotational force to the motor housing by the impact energy.

7. (Previously Presented) The electric power steering apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein the projection is configured as a screw member and the recess is configured as a through bore.

8. (Original) The electric power steering apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the motor has a rotor arranged so that a rotational center thereof intersects an axis of a steering

shaft joined to the steering member and a cylindrical motor housing for supporting said rotor, and a peripheral face of said motor housing is provided with an impact energy receiver for applying rotational force to the motor housing by the impact energy.

9. (Original) The electric power steering apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein the motor has a rotor arranged so that a rotational center thereof intersects an axis of a steering shaft joined to the steering member and a cylindrical motor housing for supporting said rotor, and a peripheral face of said motor housing is provided with an impact energy receiver for applying rotational force to the motor housing by the impact energy.

10. (Original) The electric power steering apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the motor has a rotor arranged so that a rotational center thereof intersects an axis of a steering shaft joined to the steering member and a cylindrical motor housing for supporting said rotor, and a peripheral face of said motor housing is provided with an impact energy receiver for applying rotational force to the motor housing by the impact energy.

11. (Currently Amended) An electric power steering apparatus, comprising:

a steering shaft joined to a steering member;

a shaft housing with an opening for accommodating said steering shaft;

a steering assist motor for assisting operation of a steering mechanism joined to the steering shaft, the steering assist motor having a rotor arranged so that a rotational center thereof intersects an axis of the steering shaft and a cylindrical motor housing for supporting said rotor; and

a supporting mechanism for supporting one end portion of the motor housing on the shaft housing,

wherein the supporting mechanism comprises:

a projection provided at a peripheral position of the motor housing;

an arc-shaped groove provided ~~at~~in the shaft housing, the arc-shaped groove being open to the interior of the shaft housing opening and having a discontinuity into which the projection is inserted so as to be movable in a length direction of the groove; and

a slip-off portion from where the projection slips off the arc-shaped groove when the projection moves.

12. (Previously Presented) The electric power steering apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the projection is configured as a tongue and the recess is configured as an annular groove.

13. (Previously Presented) The electric power steering apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the motor has a rotor arranged so that a rotational center thereof intersects an axis of a steering shaft joined to the steering member and a cylindrical motor housing for supporting said rotor, and a peripheral face of said motor housing is provided with an impact energy receiver for applying rotational force to the motor housing by the impact energy.

14. (Previously Presented) The electric power steering apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the projection is configured as a tongue and the recess is configured as an annular groove.

15. (Previously Presented) The electric power steering apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the motor has a rotor arranged so that a rotational center thereof intersects an axis of a steering shaft joined to the steering member and a cylindrical motor housing for supporting said rotor, and a peripheral face of said motor housing is provided with an impact energy receiver for applying rotational force to the motor housing by the impact energy.

16. (Previously Presented) The electric power steering apparatus of claim 11, wherein the arc-shaped groove of the supporting mechanism is configured as a recess within the supporting mechanism.

17. (New) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the supporting mechanism comprises an elastic member for pushing the projection at the arc-shaped groove outward at the slip-off portion.

18. (New) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 11, wherein a peripheral face of said motor housing is provided with an impact energy receiver for applying rotational force to the motor housing by the impact energy.

19. (New) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the supporting mechanism comprises an arc-shaped contact plate made of a material with low frictional resistance within the arc-shaped groove.

20. (New) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the impact releasing mechanism is configured to release support of the motor only when a vehicle crash applies the impact energy.